

CLAIMS

Claims of the present invention are as follows:

1. A method of progressively advancing an internet customer through a series of customer interest level stages towards a highest stage, comprising:

5 a) generating a website of interest accessible by one or more internet customers;

10 b) within the website, providing an initial webpage of interest for the internet customer, wherein the first webpage includes a display of segregated content representing a choice of multiple stages of progressively higher interest level found on a separate webpage of interest associated with each stage of higher interest level, the initial webpage including a link to each webpage of interest; and

15 c) directing the internet customer to a customer-selected stage of higher interest level via the link to the associated webpage of interest found on the initial webpage, wherein the associated webpage includes content satisfying the internet customer's higher interest level at the next stage.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the display of segregated content represents a category interest level selected from the following group: the internet customer's wants, the internet customer's preferences, the internet customer's felt needs, the internet customer's actual needs, the internet customer's selection of a product or service consistent with the actual needs, and the internet customer's evaluation of his or her experience of visiting one or more webpages of interest.

3. The method according to claim 2 wherein the internet customer's selection content comprises the step of providing a link to an order taker webpage allowing the internet customer to obtain the selected product or service.

25 4. The method according to claim 1 also comprising the step of directing an internet loiterer outside the website.

5. The method according to claim 2 wherein the internet customer's evaluation content comprises the step of providing a link to a survey webpage where the customer's satisfaction level is evaluated through a questionnaire.

30 6. The method according to claim 5 further comprising the step of using the customer evaluation to improve the website to increase customer's satisfaction in future website visits.

7. The method according to claim 2 wherein the customer's evaluation content comprises the step of securing referrals of other potential internet customers.

8. The method according to claim 2 also comprising the step of providing on at least one of the webpages of interest a discussion of features and benefits of at least one product or service available to the internet customer through the website.

9. The method according to claim 2 also comprising the step of providing on at least one of the webpages of interest, a discussion differentiating the products or services offered at the website from competitors offering similar products or services.

10. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a webpage of interest where the internet customer can either check whether an order has been fulfilled, check a status of the order, or change the order.

11. A method of progressively advancing an internet client through a series of client interest level stages towards a highest stage of customer interest level, each stage represented by an associated webpage, comprising:

15 a) providing a list of resources on each of the webpages, each resource having a link to one or more webpages providing content satisfying a specific market interest the client may have, wherein each webpage details an interest different than those detailed on the other webpages;

b) directing the internet client to an initial webpage of market interest having content related to a first level of interest;

20 c) directing the internet client to a second webpage of market interest having content related to a second level of market interest higher than the first level of market interest; and

25 c) using each webpage or resource list to direct the internet client to a successive webpage having content of progressively increasing market interest to the internet client while including content for discouraging returning to a lower stage of market interest.

12. A method of progressively advancing a customer through a series of custom market interest level stages towards a highest stage, comprising:

a) providing a location of commerce offering products or services, or both, and accessible by one or more clients;

30 b) within the location of commerce, providing an initial stage of market interest for the client, wherein the initial stage includes a display of segregated content representing a choice of multiple stages of progressively higher market interest level found at separate areas within the location of commerce, each area being associated

with one stage of higher market interest level, the initial stage including a path to each area of interest;

5 c) migrating the client to a customer-selected stage of higher market interest level via information offered at the initial stage of market interest and directing the client to the area associated with the customer-selected stage while providing content discouraging returning to a stage of lower market interest, wherein the associated area includes content satisfying the internet customer's higher market interest level as selected;

10 d) acquiring the client as a buyer at the location of commerce through one of the stages of market interest;

 e) retaining the buyer as an engaged customer by providing follow up information or making directed inquiries related to market interest; and

 f) capitalizing on the acquired buyer by encouraging repeat business with the location of commerce or securing referrals from the acquired buyer.

15 13. The method according to claim 12 wherein the display of segregated content represents market focus for each stage of higher market interest level that includes at least three selected from the following group: the client's wants, the client's preferences, the client's felt needs, the client's actual needs, the client's selection of a product or service consistent with the actual needs, and the client's evaluation of his or her experience of 20 visiting one or more areas of interest.

20 14. The method according to claim 13 wherein the client's selection content comprises the step of providing an encounter with an order taker allowing the client to obtain the selected product or service.

25 15. The method according to claim 12 also comprising the step of directing a non-client loiterer outside the location of commerce to the benefit of the non-client loiterer.

16. The method according to claim 13 wherein the client's evaluation content comprises the step of providing a survey where the client's satisfaction level is evaluated through a questionnaire.

30 17. The method according to claim 13 further comprising the step of using the client evaluation to improve the location of commerce to increase the client's satisfaction in future visits.

18. The method according to claim 12 wherein the migrating step also comprises the step of providing at least one of the areas of market interest a discussion of features and

benefits of at least one product or service available to the client offered by the location of commerce.

19. The method according to claim 12 wherein the migrating step also comprises the step of providing at one of the areas of market interest, a discussion differentiating the products or services offered at the location of commerce from competitors offering similar products or services.

20. The method according to claim 12 wherein the retaining step further comprises the step of providing an area of market interest where the client can either check whether an order has been fulfilled, check a status of the order, or change the order.

10 21. A method of progressively advancing a client through a series of client interest level stages towards a highest stage of client market interest level, each stage represented by an associated area of market interest, comprising:

15 a) providing a list of resources on at least one of the areas of market interest, each resource guiding the client to one or more areas of market interest that provide content satisfying a specific market interest the client may have, wherein each area of market interest details a market interest different than those detailed at the other areas of market interest;

b) directing the client to an initial area of market interest having content related to an initial level of market interest;

20 c) directing the client to a second area of market interest having content related to a second level of market interest higher than the initial level of market interest; and

25 d) using each area of market interest or resource list to direct the client to a successive area of market interest having content of progressive market interest to the client while including content for discouraging returning to a lower stage of market interest.

22. The method according to claim 1, 11, 12, or 21 wherein each stage of interest is assigned a unique color code.

23. A method of progressively advancing a potential customer through a series of customer interest level stages toward a stage of becoming an advocate who promotes a given product or service for which he had been merely a customer, comprising:

a) generating promotional material of interest and accessible to the customer; b) within the material, providing initial content representing a choice of multiple stages of progressively higher interest level and segregated within the

material to allow the customer to gravitate toward his current level of interest, said initial content including entry material associated with stages of higher interest level; and

c) directing the customer from his current level of interest to a customer-selected stage of higher interest level via at least one category of the entry material associated with the higher interest levels, wherein the material includes content satisfying the internet customer's higher interest level progressively toward the stage of becoming the advocate.

24. The method according to example 23 wherein the display of segregated

10 content represents a category interest level selected from the group consisting of the customer's wants, the customer's preferences, the customer's felt needs, the customer's actual needs, the customer's selection of a product or service consistent with the actual needs, a customer purchase of the product or service; cross purchasing activity of related products or services, and promotion of the product or service to others.

25. The method according to claim 24, wherein the customer is provided with

services responsive to the selected category of entry material corresponding to an advancement function designed to advance the customer to a higher level of interest, selected from the group consisting of (i) directing the customer from customer wants to customer preferences, (ii) directing the customer from customer preferences to customer felt needs; (iii) directing the customer to identified needs; directing the customer to an purchase processing station; directing a customer to a service operation for resolving negative experiences of the customer; directing the customer to a positive relationship activity; and directing the customer to a referral mechanism for generating other customers.

25 26. A method as defined in claim 25, wherein the functions of directing customers to progressive levels of interest are formed as part of a model incorporating variable amounts of time to be applied within the functions and yielding a prediction of likely results of marketing activity.

30 27. . A method as defined in claim 25, wherein the functions of directing customers to progressive levels of interest are formed as part of a model incorporating variable amounts of money to be applied within the functions and yielding a prediction of likely results of marketing activity.

28. A method as defined in claim 25, wherein the functions of directing customers to progressive levels of interest are formed as part of a model incorporating variable

amounts of time and money to be applied within the functions and yielding a prediction of likely results of marketing activity.

29. A method for projecting likely results of a market activity in accordance with claim 28, wherein the time and money amounts are structured with respect to the functions as part of a chart with time and money amounts indicated along different directions within the chart.
30. A method as defined in claim 29, comprising structuring the chart with the money and time amounts shown along x and y coordinates.
31. A method as defined in claim 25, including providing a factor that incorporates a variable quantity of potential customers as an element in predicting the marketing results.